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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/090,478	03/04/2002	Ismail Ibrahim Rifaat	RIFAAT5	5095
7590		06/06/2006	EXAMINER	
Shafik I. Rifaat		KRISCIUNAS, LINDA MARY		
2402 Commonwealth Avenue		ART UNIT		
Houston, TX 77006		PAPER NUMBER		
		3623		
DATE MAILED: 06/06/2006				

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

**Office Action Summary**

Application No.

10/090,478

Applicant(s)

RIFAAT, ISMAIL IBRAHIM

Examiner

Linda Krisciunas

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-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --  
**Period for Reply**

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

**Status**

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 04 March 2002.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

**Disposition of Claims**

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-18 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-18 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

**Application Papers**

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☒ The drawing(s) filed on 04 March 2002 is/are: a) ☒ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.  
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).  
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

**Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119**

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some \* c) ☐ None of:
- ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
  - ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. \_\_\_\_\_.
  - ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

\* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

**Attachment(s)**

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| 1) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)  | 4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413)<br>Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____ |
| 2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)                                   | 5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)             |
| 3) <input type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)<br>Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____ | 6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____  |

### **DETAILED ACTION**

1. The following is a Non-Final Office Action in response to the application filed March 4, 2002. Claims 1-18 are pending.

#### ***Claim Objections***

2. Claims 15-18 are objected to because of the following informalities: Line 9 of claim 15 cites "members others". The Examiner has interpreted this to be a redundancy and utilized the phrase "others" to be consistent with the language in the rest of the claim. Appropriate correction is required.
3. Claim 8 is objected due because of minor informalities. Line 16 contains a spelling error of the word "evaluating". Appropriate correction is required.

#### ***Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102***

4. The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(e) the invention was described in (1) an application for patent, published under section 122(b), by another filed in the United States before the invention by the applicant for patent or (2) a patent granted on an application for patent by another filed in the United States before the invention by the applicant for patent, except that an international application filed under the treaty defined in section 351(a) shall have the effects for purposes of this subsection of an application filed in the United States only if the international application designated the United States and was published under Article 21(2) of such treaty in the English language.

5. Claims 1-18 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) as being anticipated by Urken (US 2002/0103695).

As per claim 1, Urken teaches gathering information about a topic (see paragraph 61 and Figure 2 where the decision setup module is used for setting up an

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agenda topic and allows pooling of information with respect to the topic, this constitutes gathering information about a topic.); analyzing the information to identify existing and potential issues (paragraph 62, where it allows identification of issues and collective deliberations and decisions which constitutes analysis); selecting ones of said issues in accordance with selection criteria to form a set of selected issues (paragraph 27 teaches about a choice generator which may use a variety of scoring rules, types of choices and rules and can assign weights to votes based on select criteria. See also paragraph 121.); formulating goals in respect of the selected issues (paragraph 60, where the decisions represent the goals); preparing alternative scenarios for resolving said selected issues for meeting said goals (see paragraph 18 where brainstorming to create a list and evaluating them to see which should be on the agenda constitutes preparing alternative scenarios); evaluating alternative scenarios (paragraph 67 where alternatives are scored which provides a means for evaluating the scenarios); and selecting at least one of said scenarios for meeting said goals (paragraph 21, where the system is designed to allow “group decision making” which would constitute selecting one of the scenarios or making a decision which represents the goal).

As per claims 2-3, Urken teaches determining the selection criteria includes interactively utilizing participation with others to carry out the determining (paragraph 27 teaches about a choice generator which may use a variety of scoring rules, types of choices and rules and can assign weights to votes based on select criteria and see paragraph 89: “Another feature of the decision setup module in the present invention in block 11 of FIG. 2 is that inputs into participant selection, properties, voter

identification, and voting system guidance modules of the setup module can be determined collectively. Each list of options in these modules can be called as an agenda to allow participants to reach a consensus on rules that are used in a collective decision making process.” Where determining selection criteria would be included as an input and a voting system guidance.).

As per claims 4-7, Urken teaches analyzing the information includes interactively utilizing participation with others to carry out the decision making process (paragraph 89: “Another feature of the decision setup module in the present invention in block 11 of FIG. 2 is that inputs into participant selection, properties, voter identification, and voting system guidance modules of the setup module can be determined collectively. Each list of options in these modules can be called as an agenda to allow participants to reach a consensus on rules that are used in a collective decision making process.” Where aspects of the decision making process: analyzing (paragraph 60 and 62, where it allows identification of issues and collective deliberations and decisions which constitutes analysis), selecting issues (paragraph 62 and 89, where it allows identification of issues and collective deliberations and decisions which constitutes analysis), selection criteria (paragraph 27 teaches about a choice generator which may use a variety of scoring rules, types of choices and rules and can assign weights to votes based on select criteria. Paragraph 28 teaches the concept in a collective environment.) and goals (paragraph 60, where the final decision(s) represent the goal(s)), would be part of the setup module and the decision making process which is a

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collective process, as indicated in paragraph 89, which constitutes participation with others.).

As per claim 8, Urken teaches preparing alternative scenarios and evaluating alternative scenarios includes interactively utilizing participation with others to carry out the preparing and evaluating (paragraph 100 teaching preparing the alternatives: "The decision analysis submodule in block 22 of FIG. 4 processes the data to determine the collective ordering of the choice alternatives in an agenda." (see also paragraph 149 which provides an alternative) where the alternatives would require preparing in order to be provided and ordered and paragraph 67 teaches evaluating the alternatives, where alternatives are scored which provides a means for evaluating the scenarios, and where the scoring is performed by a group which constitutes the participation of others).

As per claim 9, Urken teaches selecting at least one scenario for meeting goals includes a step of interactively utilizing participation with others to carry out the selecting (paragraph 21 indicates group decision making process which would constitute others selecting the goal or making the decision.).

As per claim 10, Urken teaches that claim 10 recites the same limitations as claim 1 with the additional steps of selecting a topic (see paragraph 61 and Figure 2 where the decision setup module is used for setting up an agenda topic and allows pooling of information with respect to the topic. Inherently, a topic would have been selected prior to collecting information and forming the agenda for the topic) and including a respective step of participation with others in any of the foregoing steps

(Claims 4-7 recite the steps of claim 1 with the participation of others, therefore the same rejection applies.).

As per claims 11-13, Urken teaches participation with others includes public participation, interactive public participation and direct interactive public participation (see paragraph 89: "Another feature of the decision setup module in the present invention in block 11 of FIG. 2 is that inputs into participant selection, properties, voter identification, and voting system guidance modules of the setup module can be determined collectively. Also, paragraph 52 teaches the internet, where people can communicate collaboratively via networks or the internet which would constitute public participation).

As per claim 14, Urken teaches public participation includes communication using the world wide web or internet (paragraph 52 teaches the use of the internet for collaborative communication).

As per claim 15, teaches the same limitations as claims 4-7 and 10 and is therefore subject to the same art rejections.

As per claim 16, Urken teaches exchanging information interactively with others includes public participation (see paragraph 89: "Another feature of the decision setup module in the present invention in block 11 of FIG. 2 is that inputs into participant selection, properties, voter identification, and voting system guidance modules of the setup module can be determined collectively. Also, paragraph 52 teaches the internet, where people can communicate collectively via networks or the internet which would constitute public participation.).

As per claim 17, Urken teaches public participation includes communication using the world wide web or internet (paragraph 52 teaches the use of the internet for collaborative communication).

As per claim 18, Urken teaches the steps are performed utilizing a computer. (paragraph 52 teaches the use of computers)

### ***Conclusion***

6. The prior art made of record and not relied upon is considered pertinent to applicant's disclosure. The following prior art also teaches about interactive communication: Reynolds (US 2002/0146676), Reynolds (US 6,971,881), Urken et al (US 2003/0233274), Genovese (US 2006/0085367), Ouimet (US 2004/0210543), "Civic education and the decision making process" by Allen, The Social Studies, January 2000; "Effective meetings through electronic brainstorming" by Kay, Journal of Management Development, v14, n6, 1995.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Linda Krisciunas whose telephone number is 571-272-6931. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday through Friday, 6:30 am to 3:00 pm.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Tariq Hafiz can be reached on 571-272-6729. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.



Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).

LMK

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*May 26, 2006*

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